

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

Know Your English – What is the difference between 'take heart' and 'take to heart'?

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What is the difference between 'take heart' and 'take to heart'?

(Prakash Deevi, Hyderabad)

The two expressions have very different meanings. When someone tells you something and you take his comments to heart, you take them very seriously. Very often, the comments are about you and you find them very upsetting. The expression usually has a negative connotation. We often read in newspapers that some children, when scolded, take it to heart and commit suicide.

*Don't take what Malini said to heart. She was just messing with you.

*It's time we took to heart the committee's recommendations.

The expression 'take heart', on the other hand, has a much more positive connotation; it is a form of encouragement. When you tell someone to take heart, you are telling him to take comfort or take confidence from something.

*You didn't win, but take heart and start preparing for the next event.

How is the word 'ibid' pronounced?

(N. S. Srinivasan, Chennai)

The 'I' in the first and second syllable sound like the 'I' in 'sit' and 'bit'. The word is pronounced 'I-bid' with the stress on the first syllable. It comes from the Latin 'ibidem' meaning 'in the same place'. The word is mostly used in formal styles of writing to refer to a source you have quoted or cited. In scholarly articles and dissertations, when you quote someone, you are expected to provide information about the source; the author's name, the title of the book/article, year of publication, etc. If you quote from the same source again a few paragraphs later – and there are no quotations from or references to other sources in between – then, instead of repeating the same information, you can write 'ibid' after the quote. It means that the quote is from the same place – meaning, it is from the same book, by the same author, etc. 'Ibid' always refers to what immediately precedes.

What is the meaning of 'stump speech'?

(Anagha, Shornur)

This expression of American origin appears quite frequently in our newspapers and magazines because of the Presidential race taking place in the United States. A 'stump speech' is the standard political speech given by a candidate when he is campaigning. Since candidates are constantly on the move and give speeches in several towns in a day, it is very difficult for them to come up with a new one for every town. They merely recycle their old one; each individual has a standard speech that he uses wherever he goes. The name of the town and the names of people who need to be thanked are the only changes he makes. Such speeches are called 'stump speeches' because in the 18th and 19th centuries, candidates stood on the stump of a chopped down tree to make a speech. Americans use the expression 'on the stump' to mean 'on the campaign trail'.

Can the expression 'red eye' be used to mean 'to be angry'?

(K. Ananthanarayanan, Kanyakumari)

No, it cannot. The expression you have in mind is 'to see red' – it means to be extremely angry. The term 'red eye' is used to refer to late night flights that people take to reach their destination by early morning. The fares on these flights are usually cheaper. It is called 'red eye' because the passenger's eyes are usually red due to lack of sleep.

"One day you're a signature, the next day you're an autograph." – **Billy Wilder**

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